

NEWS RELEASE



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Commissioner Leslie Newman**

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ATTORNEY GENERAL COOPER ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT WITH SHELL OIL TO CURB TOBACCO SALES TO MINORS

47 Attorneys General Sign Agreement, Covering More Than 13,000 Shell Outlets

Tennessee Attorney General Bob Cooper and Mary Clement, director of the Division of Consumer Affairs today announced that Tennessee has joined the Attorneys General of 46 other jurisdictions in an agreement with Shell Oil Products US to help curb tobacco sales to minors.

The agreement includes Shell and its joint venture Motiva Enterprises LLC. Shell and Motiva supply gasoline through approximately 14,000 gas stations in the U.S. Many of these gas stations include independently-operated convenience stores that sell items including tobacco products. Shell and Motiva have agreed to adopt procedures designed to reduce sales of cigarettes to minors at these locations, although they do not directly own or operate the convenience stores at Shell stations. There are approximately 536 Shell stations in Tennessee.

"We are pleased Shell has joined a growing list of companies demonstrating their commitment to lead efforts against youth access to tobacco, in Tennessee and nationwide," Attorney General Cooper said.

Nationwide, 47 percent of underage youths who reported buying cigarettes have said they did so at gas station convenience stores. The Shell agreement was produced by an ongoing, multi-state enforcement effort among the Attorneys General, and incorporates "best practices" developed by the Attorneys General in consultation with public health researchers and state and federal tobacco-control officials. This AVC includes provisions for comprehensive training of retail personnel regarding laws prohibiting tobacco sales to minors, independent compliance checks to monitor sales practices at certain convenience stores at Shell stations, and potential sanctions against contract operators that sell tobacco to minors, among other terms.

Other recent multi-state agreements cover gas station convenience stores selling fuel under the Conoco, Phillips 66 or 76, Exxon, Mobil, BP, Amoco, ARCO and Chevron brand names, and retail and pharmacy chains Kroger, Walgreens, Rite Aid, CVS, and Wal-Mart. Today's agreement included 45 other states and the District of Columbia.

Studies show that most adult smokers began smoking before they turn 18, and that young people are particularly susceptible to the hazards of tobacco, often showing signs of addiction after smoking only a few cigarettes.